

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of all claims in the application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 21 ~~claim 5~~, wherein the rate of silver deposition in the first method step is regulated by adjusting the processing temperature.

7. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 21 ~~claim 5~~, wherein the rate of deposition of the silver in the first method step is regulated by using a Cu(I) complexing agent in the silver bath.

8. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 4~~ claim 21 wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath containing at least one silver halide complex.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 8, wherein the silver halide complex is a silver bromide complex.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 21, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a bath having a pH ranging from 4 to 6.

11. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 21, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath that additionally contains at least one Cu(I) complexing agent.

12. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the at least one Cu(I) complexing agent is selected from the group consisting of 2,2' bipyridine, 1,10-phenanthroline, 2,6-bis-[pyridyl-(2)]-pyridine, 2,2'-bichinolin, 2,2-bipyridine-5-carboxylic acid, 2,2'-bipyridine-4,4'-dicarbocyclic acid, 4,7-dihydroxyl-1,10-phenanthroline as well as derivatives thereof.

13. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 21, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath that additionally contains at least ~~one~~ one Cu(II) complexing agent.

14. (Previously presented) The method according to 13, wherein the at least one Cu(II) complexing agent is selected from the group consisting of ethylene diamine, alanine diacetic acid, amino trimethylene phosphonic acid, diethylene triamine pentamethylene phosphonic acid and 1-hydroxyethylene-1,1-diphosphonic acid.

15. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 21 wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath that additionally contains at least one surface active agent.
16. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 21, wherein the substrate is cleaned and/or etched prior to performing the first method step.
17. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein, for cleaning and/or etching, the substrate is contacted with an acidic solution containing at least one peroxy compound selected from the group consisting of alkali peroxy disulfate, alkali caroate and hydrogen peroxide prior to performing the first method step.
18. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 21, wherein the method is carried out as a horizontal conveyorized method.
19. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 21, wherein the substrate is a printed circuit board material and wherein in the second method step silver is plated for subsequently performing a soldering process, a bonding process, for press-fit technology and/or for making electrical contacts.

Claim 20. (Canceled)

21. (New) A method of plating silver on a substrate by a displacement plating reaction provided with a copper surface comprising:

- a) depositing silver on the substrate in a first method step, and
- b) plating silver on said substrate in a second method step,
 - wherein silver is deposited in the first method step at a rate that is at most half the rate of plating of silver in the second method step, and
 - wherein the rate of silver deposition from a silver deposition bath in the first method step is regulated by adjusting at least one deposition parameter and/or by adjusting the composition of the silver bath.